



student visas

25 September 2012

Australia values its international student community and is making renewed efforts to meet their needs. The purpose of this Note is to provide a summary of the student visa process including the recent changes.

An independent review of the Australian student visa program was completed in 2011. Several of the recommendations from the review have been implemented by the Australian government, including the introduction of streamlined visa processing for applicants enrolled at an Australian university and increased flexibility in working conditions for student visa holders.

The Australian Department of Immigration and Citizenship assigns assessment levels to reflect the risk posed by applicants from a particular country studying in a particular education sector, with Assessment Level 5 being the highest risk and Assessment Level 1 the lowest. The assessment level will determine the level of proof required by the applicant to qualify for a student visa. The table below shows the assessment level for students from various countries in each education sector.*

Passport held	Visa Subclass/Education Sector					
	570 ELICOS	571 Schools	572 VET	573 Higher Education	574 Postgraduate Research	575 Non Award
Argentina	2	1	2	1	1	1
Austria	1	1	1	1	1	1
Bangladesh	4	4	4	3	2	3
Belgium	1	1	1	1	1	1
Brazil	2	1	2	1	1	1
Canada	1	1	1	1	1	1
Chile	1	1	1	1	1	1
China	3	4	4	3	1	3
Colombia	2	2	3	2	2	1
Denmark	1	1	1	1	1	1
Finland	1	1	1	1	1	1
France	1	1	1	1	1	1
Germany	1	1	1	1	1	1
Greece	1	1	1	1	1	1
Hong Kong SAR	1	1	1	1	1	1
Hungary	2	1	2	1	1	1
India	4	2	4	3	1	3
Indonesia	2	1	2	2	1	2
Iran	3	3	3	3	2	2
Israel	2	3	2	2	1	1
Italy	1	1	1	1	1	1
Japan	1	1	1	1	1	1
Korea, Republic of	1	1	1	1	1	1
Malaysia	1	1	1	1	1	1
Netherlands	1	1	1	1	1	1
New Zealand	2	2	2	2	2	2
Norway	1	1	1	1	1	1
Pakistan	4	3	4	4	2	4

*For a full list visit www.immi.gov.au/students

Passport held	Visa Subclass/Education Sector					
	570	571	572	573	574	575
Papua New Guinea	2	2	2	1	1	2
Russian Federation	3	2	3	2	1	2
Saudi Arabia	1	1	2	1	1	1
South Africa	2	1	2	1	1	1
Spain	1	1	1	1	1	1
Sri Lanka	4	3	4	4	2	3
Sweden	1	1	1	1	1	1
Switzerland	1	1	1	1	1	1
United Kingdom – British Citizen	1	1	1	1	1	1
United States of America	1	1	1	1	1	1
Vietnam	3	2	3	2	1	3

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The streamlined visa process, implemented in March 2012, allows student visa applicants with a Confirmation of Enrolment from a participating Australian university, at a Bachelor, Masters or Doctoral degree level, to be assessed as a low migration risk (similar to Assessment Level 1). This includes joint degree programs undertaken with partner universities and non-award courses at an Australian university as part of an agreed student exchange agreement between universities. Nearly all Australian universities are participating in streamlined processing, including all of the Group of Eight universities. Students will still have to meet the requirements for English-language proficiency and financial capacity and will have to satisfy the 'genuine temporary entrant' requirement.

Student visa applicants in the streamlined process are required to declare they have access to the funds outlined in the table below to cover travel, tuition and living expenses for themselves (and their family if relevant) for the duration of the visa. Outside the streamlined process, Assessment Level 3 applicants, for example, are required to actually show proof that they can meet these financial requirements for the first 18 months of their stay. The level of English language proficiency is determined by the enrolling university and the 'genuine temporary entrant' requirement requires the department to be satisfied that the applicant has a genuine intention to stay in Australia temporarily.

Expenses	Per Person	Amount required in AUD
Travel	Applicant	Return air fare to Australia
	Family members	One return air fare to Australia per person
Tuition	Applicant	Course fees
	School-age children aged 5-18	AUD8 000 per year
Living	Applicant	AUD18 610 per year
	Partner	AUD6 515 per year
	First child	AUD3 720 per year
	Each other child	AUD2 790 per year

Students may work up to 40 hours per fortnight while on a student visa and unrestricted hours during any scheduled course break. This was relaxed from a strict 20 hours per week rule in March 2012 to allow students and employers more flexibility of working hours. Higher Degree by Research students have unlimited work rights once their course has commenced.

New post-study work arrangements are proposed for introduction in early 2013. This will allow students who have completed their studies in Australia on a student visa at a Bachelor level or higher to apply for a post-study work visa. This would allow them to work in Australia for two years (if Bachelor degree or Masters by coursework degree), three years (if Masters by research degree) or four years (if Doctoral degree).

This Note is based on information valid at the date of publication. For current information on student visas as well as the online application visit www.immi.gov.au/students.